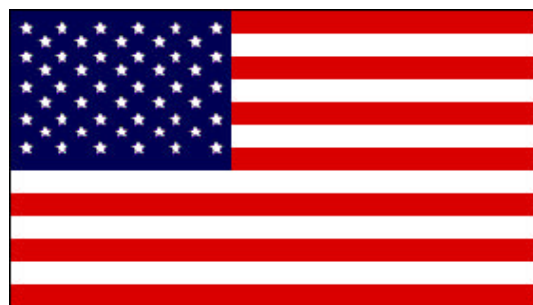


The Fire Fighter Gazette

Issue 23

November 2001

Air Force Fire Protection has a new Chief!



September 11, 2001

Competition was keen and the selection process difficult for the selection board.



On Monday, 19 November, it was announced that **Mr. Don Warner**, Command Chief, Air Force Reserve Command, would be taking over duties as the new Chief, Air Force Fire Protection. Lieutenant Colonel Worrell, Director,

Contingency Support, HQ AFCEA, announced:

I am pleased to announce that Mr. Donald W. Warner, AFRC/CEF, has been selected as the new Air Force Fire Chief (Chief, Fire Protection Division, HQ AFCEA, Tyndall AFB, FL). He has accepted the job and will start the first week of Jan 02. Competition was keen and the selection process difficult for the selection board. He is the right man for the job and we have all the confidence he will do a terrific job in leading the Air Force fire services into the future.

See page 2 for some background information from Chief Warner...

I would be remiss if the terrorist attack on America were not on the front page of this publication. It was a horrific event, one that will be on our minds for a long time. The victims of the attack, including the emergency services personnel, are in our hearts and prayers.

The impact on America has been profound in some areas, and almost non-existent in others. Travel has been impacted (and rightfully so), our military installation security has certainly been increased, and emergency services, specifically fire protection, will never be the same. I realize there are many stories out there that reflect the mood of this country, and as I started to put this publication together, I had to decide how many of these stories I should put into this edition. The answer was not an easy one, and I am still struggling with it. Page 4 has a story that represents a lot of emotions, and includes some thoughts and opinions that I share. I hope during this time of national crisis, all is well with you and your families, and if you have been personally affected, please know that our hearts and prayers are with you.

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Words from the new Chief ...



Chief Donald W. Warner has been selected as the next Air Force Fire Chief, effective 30 December 2001. He has been the Command Fire Chief for the Air Force Reserve Command since January 1987.

He served in the U.S. Air Force for 20 years and retired as a CMSgt in 1985.

Chief Warner began his Air Force career in August 1965. The Air Force determined that he should be a fire fighter and sent him directly to Pope AFB, North Carolina in November that same year from basic military training. Following Pope, he served tours at Udorn Royal Thai Air Base, Thailand (1969-70), Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Viet Nam (1970-71), Hurlburt Field, Florida (1971), Chanute AFB, Illinois (technical instructor) (1971-75), Utapao Royal Thai Air Base, Thailand (1975), Eglin AFB, Florida (1975-78, Tyndall AFB, Florida (HQ AFCEA) (1978-1982), Andersen AFB, Guam (1982-84), and finally, Randolph AFB, Texas where he retired from active duty in October 1985.

After retirement, Chief Warner worked for Aid Association for Lutherans and Southland Corporation in San Antonio, Texas. Then, he was contacted and encouraged to apply for the position of Command Fire Chief for the Air Force Reserve Command, which he did. He was subsequently selected, in January 1987, and has remained in that position.

Chief Warner is married to the former Connie Wurzbarger. They have two daughters, Dawn and

Melanie, and two beautiful granddaughters.

My Vision

A force of highly trained and adequately equipped personnel able to protect Air Force people and property from situations and conditions that threaten, regardless of the source.

What I'll be talking about first....

- More emphasis on service and less on pay
- More effort to make second-term airmen out of our first-term fire fighters
- More pride in simply being a fire fighter
- More mentoring of our young people, both military and civilian
- Not allowing a single individual to be alone in a dorm room during major holidays
- Never sacrificing a fire fighter to save others
- Absolute integrity at all times, in all places, by all Air Force fire fighters
- An appreciation for our history

What I'll be talking about all the time....

- Fire Fighter Safety
- Basic Fire Fighter Skills – getting the hose off the truck!
- Incident Command – Someone has to be in charge and it might as well be us!
- Efficiency – reducing the cost of fire protection
- Leadership...integrity...leadership...integrity...leadership...integrity
- KISS Principle



Words from Major General Robbins



Editor's note: This piece was written on September 14th by MajGen Robbins, The Air Force Civil Engineer.

As the terrible events of September 11th sink in, I want to pass along some thoughts to the Air Force Civil Engineer family. I hope MAJCOM/CE's will ensure this gets to your

staffs and to all our great people at unit level....

Everyone in the Air Force has been affected by these events. Blue-suiters, civilians, contractors, and our families have suffered as we watch the almost surreal tragedies in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania replayed, discussed, debated, analyzed, etc in the media, around the water cooler, and across our own dinner tables. Everyone knows what happened...nobody knows why it happened...and worst of all, nobody knows when it might happen again.

Meanwhile, members of the Civil Engineer team continue to support our Air Force. Despite our grief and our concerns for our country and our fellow citizens, we continue to do whatever it takes to keep our installations safe/secure, ensure we're prepared for any contingency which might come up in the days/weeks/months ahead, and take care of the important day-to-day functions which we do all the time to keep our installations operating. Every single person, no matter if they're military or civilian, enlisted or officer, white collar or craftsman, should/must know that they are important, that their job is important, and that what we bring to the Air Force and our nation is part of a complex, too-many-moving-parts-to-imagine instrument of incredible power, reach and precision.

There's one particular segment of our Civil

Engineer family I want to address....our Fire Protection professionals. During my 32 years (today is in fact the 32nd anniversary of the day 2/Lt Robbins arrived on active

duty) in Air Force blue, all of them as a Civil Engineer officer, I've grown to admire and respect the special bond among members of the Fire Protection profession across the spectrum, whether they serve the military or the civilian community. That kind of universal comradeship comes, I suspect, from the shared commitment in the strongest possible terms to "Service Before Self" as a way of life. I have absolutely no doubt that across the Air Force our Fire Protection airmen, NCOs and civilians are saying not "There but for the grace of God go I" but "May the grace of God be with my fallen brothers and sisters" All of us share that thought and pray the same prayers.

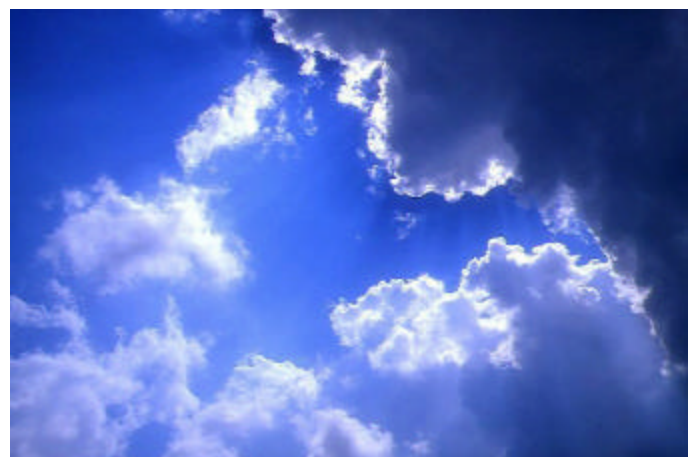
I am incredibly proud of each and every one of you and assure you that all your efforts are worth it. Stay the course.

Earnest O. Robbins II MajGen USAF

The Air Force Civil Engineer



U.S. AIR FORCE



Why I'm a Fire Fighter

As we mourn our dead fire fighters once again, this time the result of a horribly cowardly act, we are regarded as heroes. We are praised by those that, for a time, hold us closely to their hearts and share our terrible heartbreak for those we have lost.

At the same time, we try to understand why we love being a fire fighter and strive to explain it to others. We have struggled for our entire life as a fire fighter for words that convey our message. It is very difficult to explain it to others because we don't understand it ourselves. Even though our fellow citizens that don't wear the badge call us heroes at times like these, our motivation is not to become heroes. We do it for the love of fire fighting, the thrill of the response, the joy of helping others, the excitement of being first responder to every bad situation; but mostly we do it because of an innate desire to save our fellow man. We make our choice knowing full well that at some point we may have to make the ultimate sacrifice. Now is a good time to reflect on why we became fire fighters and why we stayed with it. It wasn't because of the great salaries we now enjoy - this wasn't always the case. It wasn't the best retirement system in the free world that we now enjoy - there are heroes that do the job every day that don't have a retirement system. It was the passion for fire fighting. There's nothing that comes close to the joy it brings us. There's nothing that can replace it. It is our passion - our calling - our reason for being here. We don't know why -- we just accept it and hope others will accept it too. Remember this the next time you sit a new fire fighter behind a computer screen; the next time you give a rookie fire fighter a stack of books to research. They didn't become a fire fighter to



do that. They won't remain an Air Force fire fighter if we don't allow them to realize their calling. They'll go someplace else. But if they have been called to be a fire fighter, they'll be a fire fighter somewhere. At the World Trade Center many of our brothers and sisters paid the ultimate price for being "first," along with the thousands they were trying to save. To the

trained fire fighter, the collapse was predictable. We know that uncontrolled fire will quickly weaken any structure. We also know that the collapse of any floor of a multistory building will bring the entire structure to the ground. Yet, the fire fighters never backed off. Why? Because they couldn't. Fire fighters just don't back off when there's even a remote chance that they can save someone! It was their calling. We will never know if they were aware of their perilous situation. My guess is that they knew full well. In the past several years the leaders of Air Force fire protection have preached fire fighter safety. I have said myself that "if someone must die, it can't be a fire fighter." Despite all the training we've had, the committees we've formed to study the issues, the money we've spent providing the absolute best safety gear; when the chips are down and people need help, we, like the fire fighters in the World Trade Center, will likely be found at ground zero. Note that I used "we" in this message. That's because, when a fire fighter dies, all fire fighters die a little. Even though we don't know the fire fighters that perished personally, we are one at times like these. We don't just show sympathy when they die; we pray for their soul, weep for their families, cry for their children, and agonize for the victims they didn't save. May God have mercy on us and keep us safe.

Editor's note: This article was "borrowed" from the AFRC web page...we suspect we know who the author is, but since it wasn't listed on that page, we won't speculate here...

Stuff...

Corrective Eye Surgery for Firefighters: As a follow-up to Fire Panel Action Item FP01-06, Lt Col Kimberly Slawinski (AFMOA/SGZC) was contacted about corrective eye surgery under the Warfighter Program. According to Lt Col Slawinski, the Warfighter Program for non-aviators is still being coordinated at the HQ USAF level and is expected to be released before the end of the year (CY01). Under the program, any member of the Air Force may receive Photo refractive Keratotomy or PRK surgery. There will be five levels of priority, and firefighters have been given Level II priority. As directed by CSAF, aviators and special duty personnel have the highest priority (Level I). Lt Col Slawinski indicated that most of the Level I people desiring PRK have already undergone surgery and that there should be no delays in scheduling firefighters once the program is released to non-aviators. Individuals desiring PRK surgery should contact their medical facility's Optometry Flight and follow the procedures established by the Warfighter Program after it is announced. (HQ AFCESA/CEXF, CMSgt Dana F. Mason, DSN 523-6152)

More Courses Accredited at the DoD Fire Academy:

On 7 November 2001, the Louis F. Garland Fire Academy received accreditation for the Fire Officer III, Fire Officer IV, and Fire Inspector III courses. The independent review team from the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) found no deficiencies in these programs and noted that the Academy is "one of the best in the nation". For the first time in Air Force history, we can train a firefighter in-residence from the recruit level through the fire chief level. Only one other IFSAC-accredited training facility or state agency in the country can make that claim. The tradition of outstanding preparation and academic excellence by the Louis F. Garland Fire Academy continues to keep Air Force fire protection personnel the best trained firefighters in the business. (HQ AFCESA/CEXF, CMSgt Dana F. Mason, DSN 523-6152)

AF Policy Directive 32-20, Fire Protection: The MAJCOM Fire Protection review of AFD 32-20 was initiated in late October 2001. We have received review comments from all commands. Comments are being consolidated for presentation at the HQ AFCESA/CEXF hosted Fire Panel meeting. Upon agreement with structure, terminology, and content, the draft AFD will be forwarded to ILEX for preliminary command coordination. Once commands provide their respective comments, the document will be finalized for prescribed formal coordination and approval. (HQ AFCESA/CEXF, Mr. George F. Hall, DSN 523-6159)

NFPA Offer

Protecting first responders from the hazards they encounter - or may encounter - is challenging work. In addition to contending with actual and suspected cases of anthrax exposure, our nation's first responders face daily encounters with common chemicals that can be far deadlier. In an effort to best prepare the emergency response community to deal with today's haz-mat issues, NFPA is providing free online access to three critical National Fire Codes® documents:

NFPA 471: *Recommended Practice for Responding to Hazardous Materials Incidents*

NFPA 472: *Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents*

NFPA 473: *Professional Competence of Emergency Medical Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents*

In addition, NFPA is providing free downloads of four supplements from our Hazardous Materials Response Handbook. You can access all of these documents and related links at: <http://www.nfpa.org/Codes/CodesandStandards/Offer/Offer.asp>

This page includes a letter from George Miller, who says, "NFPA has a long history of working alongside the emergency response community, both in collaborative efforts to increase public safety and also in programs designed to promote firefighter safety and health. We are pleased to make accessing personal safety information a little easier for those we depend on to protect us day in and day out." (HQ AFCESA/CEXF, CMSgt Carl B. Glover, DSN 523-6112)

Wildland Fire Fighting Vehicle Contract Award:

Emergency-One (Ocala, Florida) fire fighting vehicle manufacturing company has been awarded a FY00 priority buy program funded contract to provide fifteen wildland fire fighting vehicles for the Air National Guard. These vehicles will be distributed to pre-identified locations supporting range and forestry missions. A Post Award Orientation Conference (POAC) is scheduled for 14-16 Nov 01 in Ocala, FL. Participants will include representatives from WR-ALC/LEC/LES, ANGR/CEXF, HQ AFCESA/CEXF, and contract management. The meeting is designed to finalize contract issues and delivery schedules, clarify Commercial Item Description (CID) and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) test protocols and requirements, and select vehicle options. (HQ AFCESA/CEXF, Mr. George F. Hall, DSN 523-6159)



More Stuff...

Fire Protection Staffing (as of Oct 2001)

Firefighter World Challenge X Competition:

From 31 October to 3 November 2001, representatives from the HQ AFCESA Contingency Support Directorate accompanied the five USAF Fire Departments competing at the Firefighter Combat Challenge International Championship "World Challenge X" which was held at the Mud Island Park in Memphis, Tennessee. Approximately 800 of the fittest firefighters from across the United States and Canada matched their strength and speed in one of the most demanding competitions in all of sports. In its 10th year of competition, the Challenge, billed as "The Toughest Two Minutes in Sports" has attracted over 10,000 firefighters and 5 million spectators at over 20 annual regional events in the United States, and Canada. The top finishers at each event competed at *World Challenge X*. ESPN will broadcast this event for the 9th consecutive year (Air Dates TDB). The firefighters that qualified and competed at *World Challenge X* were from: Edwards AFB, Travis AFB, Little Rock AFB, Ramstein AB, and Goodfellow AFB (DoD Fire Academy). Four teams advanced to the finals of the relay event (Travis, Edwards, Ramstein, and DoD Fire Academy). Ramstein and Edwards advanced to the top 64 teams, Goodfellow advanced to the top 16, and Travis advanced to the top 8 before being eliminated. All of the Air Force teams were very competitive in this very intense competition, where hundredths of a second determine final ranking. Additionally, the Air Force teams and the SAM Squad (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines) received many outstanding/positive comments from the on-site announcer during the event. The fastest Air Force individual this year was SSgt A. J. Eversley (Travis AFB) who recorded a performance time of 1 minute and 38.67 seconds. SSgt Eversley's time is only 19 seconds off the new world record (1 minute and 19:02 seconds) that was set at this year's event by a firefighter from Overland Park Kansas Fire Department. HQ AFCESA will be providing detailed information on the event to the fire community in the near future. A video and CD (still pictures) are forthcoming as well. The best Air Force performance times at World Challenge X will be recognized at next years DoD Fire and Emergency Services Training Conference. (CMSgt Carl Glover, HQ AFCESA/CEXF, DSN 523-6112)

Fire Instructor Selected for OTS and Pilot Training:

TSgt John Hampel an instructor at the DoD Fire Training Academy, Goodfellow AFB, TX was selected Officer Training School (OTS) and pilot training. TSgt

AFSC	GRADE	AUTH	ASSGN	PCT	NOTES
3E700	CMSGT	27	17	63%	
3E790	SMSGT	63	39	62%	
3E7X1	MSGT	211	199	94%	
	TSGT	344	384	112%	
	TOTAL 7-LEVEL	555	583	105%	
	SSGT	690	681	99%	
	SRA	1158	822	71%	
	TOTAL 5-LEVEL	1848	1503	81%	
	3-LEVEL	1121	1073	96%	
	TOTAL	3587	3198	89%	does not include, CMSgts

Hampel is an outstanding instructor and is one of the Goodfellow AFB's Wing nominees for the Top Technical Instructor of the year competition. (CMSgt Carl Glover, HQ AFCESA/CEXF, DSN 523-6112)

The interim change to AFMAN 32-4005, Personnel Protection and Attack Actions is now available on the AF Publishing Website. It provides guidance for the Air Force Contamination Control Area (CCA) processing for the Battle Dress Overgarment (BDO), Chemical Protective Overgarment (CPO), Joint Fire Fighter Integrated Response Ensemble (J-FIRE) and the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Level A Suit. You may download it at

<http://afpubs.hq.af.mil/pubs/ic.asp?org=AF>

(MSgt Sam Love, HQ AFCESA/CEXR, DSN 523-6130)

HQ AFCESA is looking for suggestions for equipment to nominate for Commercial Exploitation Project testing. Basically, they test the commercially available equipment to determine if the equipment performs as advertised or could meet an Air Force need. (CMSgt Carl Glover, HQ AFCESA/CEXF, DSN 523-6112)

Job Opportunity: FIREFIGHTER (3E7X1) SMSGT to fill a Chief Billet at Randolph AFB, IG Team. To volunteer, send an e-mail ASAP (include your SSAN) to: WILLIAM.ALBRIITTON@AFPC.RANDOLPH.AF.MIL (must be received NLT 10 December). Address Questions regarding the position to Lt Col McCaughan DSN: 487-2078 .

Fire News

DoD Awards Banquet News!!



For those of you that may have not heard, the Air Force did very well at the DoD Fire and Emergency Services Awards Banquet on 29 August in New Orleans. To re-cap, here are all the winners:

- The Air Force fire department of the year winner was the 35th Civil Engineer Squadron, **Misawa Air Base**, Japan. Congratulations to Misawa AFB, **also the recipient of the DoD Award!**
- The Air Force military firefighter of the year winner was **SSgt Kile W. Stewart**, 18th Civil Engineer Squadron, Kadena Air Base, Japan. Congratulations to SSgt Stewart, **also the recipient of the DoD Award!**
- The Air Force civilian firefighter of the year winner was Mr. **Joseph R. Suddarth**, 96th Civil Engineer Group, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. Congratulations to Mr. Suddarth, **also the recipient of the DoD Award!**
- The Air Force military fire officer of the year winner was **SMSgt Timothy J. Seigal Sr.**, 95th Civil Engineer Group, Edwards Air Force Base, California. CWO4 Julio Lopez, MCAS Miramar (Marine Corps) was the DoD winner.
- The Air Force civilian fire officer of the year winner was Mr. **Ernst R. Piercy**, 10th Civil Engineer Group, United States Air Force Academy, Colorado. Mr. Lothar Eckrich, Heidelberg (Army) was the DoD winner.
- The Air Force firefighter heroism award winners were Mr. **Mark A. Smith** and Mr. **Neil A. Davies**, 48th Civil Engineer Squadron, RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom. The Fire Fighting & Damage Control Teams, USS Cole (Navy) were the DoD winners.

Congratulations to all of the winners!!

Relocation Bonuses

In the near future we (the CECP) will be able to start paying a relocation bonus for hard to fill (HTF) locations. I am on the working group established by the CECP Policy Council Chair to develop the criteria, amounts and so forth. What it amounts to at this point is the bonus would be a % of your salary i.e., 10, 15 or 25% if you accept a job at HTF locations. In the last 5 years fire has had 88 of these HTF locations. So it looks like we will be getting our share of the relocation bonus money. Don't call the career program or the CPF -- I will keep you advised as this goes through the wickets to completion. (HQ AFCESA/CEXF, Mr. Hugh Pike, DSN 523-6214)

Firefighter Fitness Program Update

Editor's note: Do not implement this program until the DoD guidance is published. Furthermore, do not change the program in any way, to include trying to implement the Fire Fighter Combat Challenge regiment in lieu of this program!

- We have adopted the recommendations made in the *Review and Analysis Report* that were evaluated and validated by several scientists, doctors, and firefighters. By combining key elements and features of several programs, DoD will have a new Fitness/Wellness Program that meets the needs of DoD firefighters and our customers, has a solid science base and is legally defensible.

- Remaining Deliverables and Timelines:

- Solicit funds necessary to purchase assessment equipment and fitness software (Complete)
- Purchase rescue mannequins and heart rate monitors (Complete)
- Develop a new firefighter fitness software program (Complete)
 - Duplicate the fitness software (ECD: Jul 01)
 - Distribute the fitness software (ECD: Aug 01)
- Draft a DoD Firefighter Fitness/Wellness Manual (ECD: Dec 01)
 - Coordinate the Manual (ECD: Mar 02)
 - Publish the Manual (ECD: Apr 02)
- Provide customer training by conducting at least 10 regional workshops
 - Two in PACAF, two in USAFE and six conducted throughout the United States
 - Training will begin after the manual is published
- Produce an instructional video after the DoD Manual is officially published (HQ AFCESA/CEXF, CMSgt Jim Podolske, DSN 523-6321)

From Chief Jim McKay, WPAFB Fire Department:



Recent promotions at the Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio Fire Department:

- Mr. **Vincent Trombino**, GS-9 Lead Fire Inspector
- Mr. **Ron Emmerick**, GS-9 Fire Protection Specialist (Training Officer)
- Mr. **Steve Langstaff**, GS-8 District Chief
- Mr. **Randy Hawkins**, GS-8 District Chief
- Mr. **Mike Brumfield**, reassigned to GS-8 Inspector



Graduate!

CMSgt Jim Podolske graduated from the University of Cincinnati on June 8th with his Baccalaureate in Fire Administration. Chief Podolske has been an advocate for training and education for as long as I've known him. His extensive work at

Headquarters, Civil Engineer Support Agency has led to dramatic improvements in Air Force fire protection, including CerTest and the DoD Fire Fighter Certification Program. Never being one to settle for halfway on anything, he aggressively pursued his degree, and flew to Cincinnati in June, where the degree was conferred upon him. My only regret is that I was unable to make the trip...Way to go Jim!! {editor}

Cancellation of Rescue Technician, Hazardous Materials Train-The-Trainer, and Hazardous Materials Train-The-Trainer Awareness Course Classes at Goodfellow AFB Texas.

1. Effective 3 Jan 2002 the X3AZR3E751-018 Rescue Technician classes will be canceled. Per HQ AFCESA tasking letter dated 20 Mar 2001, the Rescue Technician II will be under course development.

2. Effective 21 May 2002 starting with X3AZR3E751-018 Rescue Technician class date 21 May 2002-11 Jun 2002 will resume in resident rescue technician programs. The current FY02 training schedule has changed to reflect new Rescue Technician II class dates.

3. Effective 7 Jan 2002 the X3AZR3E771-018 Hazardous Materials Train-the-Trainer classes will be canceled. Per HQ AFCESA tasking letter dated 20 Mar 2001, the weapons of mass destruction and fire instructor III will be under course development.

4. Effective 18 Jun 2002 starting with X3AZR3E771-018 Hazardous Materials Train-the-Trainer class date 18 Jun 2002 -16 Jul 2002 will resume in resident Hazardous Materials Train-the-Trainer programs. The current FY02 training schedule has changed and new class dates will be posted in the future.

5. Effective 8 Jan 2002 the X3AZR3E951-000 Hazardous Materials Train-the-Trainer Awareness classes will be canceled. Per HQ AFCESA tasking letter dated 20 Mar 2001, the weapons of mass destruction and Fire

Instructor III will be under course development.

6. Effective 09 Jul 2002 starting with X3AZR3E951-000 Hazardous Materials Train-the-Trainer Awareness class date 09 JUL 2002-11 JUL 2002 will resume in resident Hazardous Materials Train-the-Trainer Awareness programs. The current FY02 training schedule has changed and new class dates will be posted in the future.

(Wendy Johnson, Fire Protection Training Manager, DSN 477-4840)

Firefighter vacancies at Vance AFB

Minimum DOD/IFSAC certification is Firefighter II. Airport Firefighter would be a plus but will train to the other required certifications if necessary.

Salary is approximately 26K starting out plus excellent medical, dental and retirement program. Location of Vance AFB is Enid OK which has a population of approximately 50,000. Cost of living is not excessive and housing availability is good. If interested, contact Chief Diener DSN 448-7262/Commercial 580-213-7262, and send resumes to:

Chief Ronald Diener
Vance AFB Fire Department
546 Elam Road
Vance AFB, OK, 73705-5508
FAX :580-213-7095

The AFCESA contingency quick reference site:

<https://wwwmil.afcesa.af.mil/directorate/cex/QuickRef.html>



Air Force Academy fire fighters shave their heads in support of a local boy suffering from cancer. Monies raised during the event went to the "Make-A-Wish" Foundation.

Desire to serve, ability to perform, courage to act

Commentary by Lt. Col. Theresa C. Carter 355th Civil Engineer Squadron 09/24/01 - DAVIS-MONTHAN AIR FORCE BASE, Arizona.

I developed the idea for this commentary while attending the Department of Defense fire conference a few weeks ago. "The desire to serve, the ability to perform, the courage to act," is the motto of Air Force firefighters.

Before I could put the finishing touches on the article, the terrorist attacks in New York City and at the Pentagon forever changed the world as we know it. After watching those events, it was clear to me that the motto has a much broader application.

The desire to serve. Each of us wearing a military uniform decided to serve our country for a variety of reasons. Perhaps it was patriotism, a desire to travel, or a chance to acquire new skills and an education. Regardless of the reason, we all belong to an organization, and to a way of life, that is bigger than we are. We are a team of more than a million dedicated soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines. As the nation watched in horror the events following the Sept. 11 attacks, nothing brought us closer to tears than the image of firefighters and police officers rushing to provide assistance while everyone else was fleeing the crumbling World Trade Center. Hundreds of emergency responders lost their lives as a result of their desire to serve and their placing service before self.

The ability to perform. One of the most basic responsibilities of supervisors and leaders is to ensure the people entrusted to their care are ready to perform their duties when called upon. In the military, these duties are performed across the full spectrum of conflict, from daily peacetime activities to armed conflict against our nation's enemies. The training we do every day ensures we are prepared for any situation, anytime. In addition, each of us has a personal responsibility to ensure we are physically and mentally prepared to answer the call. We achieve excellence in all we do through the collective efforts of individuals and supervisors. In the coming weeks, our military may be asked to respond to the barbaric act of terrorism inflicted on us. I'm confident in our ability to perform.

The courage to act. Courage involves not only physical courage but moral as well. Our military history is filled with stories of incredible physical courage, from the first shots fired at (the battle of) Lexington and Concord to the beaches of Normandy (to the) sands of Iraq and Kuwait. We have also heard stories of great moral courage -- individuals who had the integrity to do the right thing, regardless of the personal consequences. People like John Hancock and the other signers of the Declaration of Independence, who knew that placing their signature on that sacred document could be the equivalent of signing their own

death certificate. People like Sen. John McCain, who refused early release as a prisoner of war in Hanoi because he feared the North Vietnamese would use it for propaganda purposes.

Those in the fire service, both military and civilian, demonstrate the courage to act every day, whether they are responding to a structural fire, an in-flight emergency on a military aircraft, or to the unspeakable horror that we saw Sept. 11.

As the granddaughter, niece and cousin of several Los Angeles firefighters and as the base fire marshal here, I have a special appreciation for firefighters and their desire to serve, ability to perform, and courage to act. My thoughts and prayers are with the families of those who lost their lives in an attempt to save others in New York, and with all of the victims and their families in this tragic and cowardly act of terrorism.

My faith, however, in our nation's resolve and in the ability of our military to successfully respond to these attacks remains unshakeable. May God bless the land of the free and the home of the brave.

FIRE & RESCUE POSITIONS in the MIDDLE EAST

Interested and qualified candidates should submit a chronological resume, copies of certifications and DD 214 if military service to: Vinnell Corporation, 12150 East Monument Dr, Suite 800, Attn: ES-F&R, Fairfax, VA 22033; fax number 703 385-1262. EOE. Inquiries to 1-800-444-7264, x213/214.

Fire Fighter – 10 positions

You will perform as a fire fighter, to include rescue operations, as required. To qualify you must be a High School graduate with some college and certification as a Fire Fighter 1 and 2 with training in emergency medical aid; at least 5 years firefighting experience either with U.S. military or as a civilian; EMT-Basic certification preferred. Knowledge of fire suppression, medical aid, investigations, equipment maintenance, administration, inspections, fire prevention and the ability to instruct are required.

Driver Operator – 4 positions

You will perform as an operator for pumper and as a driver for a medical aid vehicle. To qualify, you must be a high school graduate with some college, certified Fire Fighter 1 and 2 with training in emergency medical aid; licensed medical aid/pumper truck driver; at least 2 years experience driving pumper trucks or medical aid vehicles in either the U.S. military or as a civilian; EMT-Basic certification is preferred. Knowledge of fire suppression, medical aid, investigations, equipment maintenance, administration, inspections, fire prevention, and the ability to instruct are required. Must be licensed to drive pumper truck or medical aid vehicle.